

Single Parent Networker

Ascension, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit,
Corpus Christi, St. Anne, St. Mary, St. Joseph,
Christ the King, and Spirit of Life

Volume 24 Issue 5 (Also available in Spanish)

May 2015

COPING STRATEGIES FOR SINGLE PARENTS

It is a challenging and difficult time to be raising children, especially if you are a single parent. You may be short on time, energy, money and patience. You are trying to do the best you can, but it just seems like it's never enough. You know that there are only so many hours in a day, and you can only do so much. Perhaps life feels like it is spinning out of control. If it feels like you are being pushed and pulled in every direction, some of these coping strategies may help.

1. DON'T BUY INTO GLOOM AND DOOM STATISTICS

Children who are raised by single parents are not doomed to failure. Despite all that you may have heard or read, children raised by single parents are loving, caring, successful adults. Regardless of whether you became a single parent as a result of divorce or death of the other parent, your ability to love and care for your children is more influential than statistical data.

2. SOMETIMES GOOD ENOUGH IS GOOD ENOUGH

Of course you want to do

your best when it comes to your children, but the reality is that there are times when you can only do so much. Sometimes it is important for things to be done correctly and in a timely manner, but there are other times when good enough is good enough. Stand your ground about the things that really matter, figure out when an OK job is acceptable, and let go of those unrealistic expectations.

3. TAKING STOCK

If you want to implement some changes but don't know where to start, I recommend that you take stock of what is working and is not working in your life. Often we pay more attention to what is not working, and can cite reason after reason for why we are depressed, anxious, angry or frustrated. However, we may not be aware of what is working and why today was better than yesterday.

Pay attention to when things seem a little easier a little less stressful, and then try to pinpoint specific behavior patterns that might account for the reduced stress. Make

a list or a chart to take stock. Seeing it in writing can be very helpful. What am I doing that IS working? What I'm doing that is NOT working. What do I need to START doing? What do I need to STOP doing?

4. BRING CHAOS UNDER CONTROL

Disorganization at home, work or school costs you precious time, energy and money. If you are surrounded by clutter, papers, schoolwork and stuff everywhere, you may feel stressed and frantic the minute you open the door to your home. Most people are strongly affected by their environment, even if they don't realize it. Is there a room or place in your home that gives you a sense of peace and harmony? If not, try to create at least one space that helps relieve your stress. Pay attention to how you feel in that space. Often my clients tell me that they feel calm the minute they step into my waiting room, even if they had a bad day or were stuck in traffic. I encourage them to

recreate that environment at home using whatever helps them feel more calm and relaxed, such as plants, artwork, soft pillows, comfortable furniture etc.

5. ONE DAY AT A TIME

When things feel particularly stressful, remind yourself to just take it one day at a time. It may feel like the hard times will last forever, but taking it one day at a time keeps the focus on the present and is not so overwhelming. Sometimes single parents feel alone, isolated and overwhelmed, and do not have a support system in place to talk through problems with another adult. Don't be afraid to ask for help and support when you need some compassion and assistance.

SHELLEE MOORE, M.F.T

www.thesolutiontherapist.com

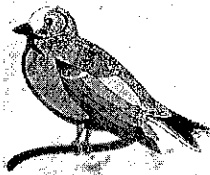
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"A mothers love is patient and forgiving, when all others are forsaking, it never fails or falters, even though the heart is breaking."

- Helen Rice



Dear Lord,

We welcome the

longer warmer days.

We welcome the

flowers and the birdsong.

We welcome the chance to play and praise you.

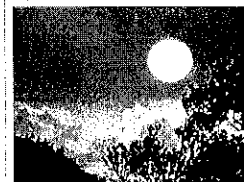
Thank you for the wonders of your creation.

Thank you for the gift of our lives.

Thank you for the gift of one another.

We praise you now and forever!

Amen



"Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending."

-Maria Robinson



Parenting Pointers

622. May 1: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." (John 14:15) Just as God gave us commandments, healthy families have rules that help keep order and keep the peace. What are some of your family rules? Do you need any new ones or to let go of outdated ones? Discuss together.

623. May 8: Generally, a mother's love for her child is assumed and hopefully reciprocated. Yes, show love for your mother (or someone who has been like a loving mother to you) this weekend. Identify and share an act of sacrifice made on your behalf by your mother. What a gift!

624. May 15: Ascension: As we remember Jesus ascending into heaven, perhaps you and your child could "lift up" in prayer the memory of deceased relatives who have gone to be with God. Even though we don't know where heaven is, children can watch a balloon or kite ascend toward the heavens - and pray.

626. May 29: June 1 is National Go Barefoot Day. Have fun together as a family being silly and carefree. But, why not make a difference to those who don't have shoes to take off. Count your shoes and check out Soles4Souls.org

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May is the month of Our Lady.

Our heavenly mother has been the undoer of knots since the early church. Eve disobeyed in the garden of Eden and began a life of disgrace for all. Mary, by her faithfulness to God, undid the knots, and continues to untie for us the knots we take to her in prayer. God has given Mary the role of our Mother and she is able to untangle our sins through her maternal love.

What are these knots that we encounter in our lives today and seek Mary's help with? All the problems we see no answers for. The deep hurts and the despair of someone when they seek to divorce, the anguish and grief of a person who is mourning the death of their spouse. The knots of an alcoholic child or a family member who has a substance abuse problem, or mental illness. Unemployment, fear, depression, guilt, all these things are knots in our lives that we look for direction and healing. Mary understands that these knots distance us from her son and she doesn't want that to happen, so one by one she will begin to undo the knots of our lives and lead us closer to her son if we only ask her. Below is a link for the Novena to Mary Undoer of Knots.

<http://catholicism.about.com/od/To-Mary-Undoer-of-Knots/p/Novena-to-Mary-Undoer-of-Knots.htm>

Don't count the years-count the memories

There are moments in life when you miss someone so much that you just want to pick them from your dreams and hug them for real!

Sometimes when the door of happiness closes, another opens; but often times we look so long at the closed door that we don't see the one, which has been opened for us.

Dream what you want to dream; go where you want to go; be what you want to be, because you have only one life to do all the things you want to do.

May you have enough happiness to make you sweet, enough trials to make you strong, enough sorrow to keep you human and enough hope to make you happy.

The happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the most of everything that comes along their way.

When you were born, you were crying and everyone around you was smiling. Live your life so at the end, you're the one who is smiling and everyone around you is crying.

Don't count the years-count the memories.....



Mother's

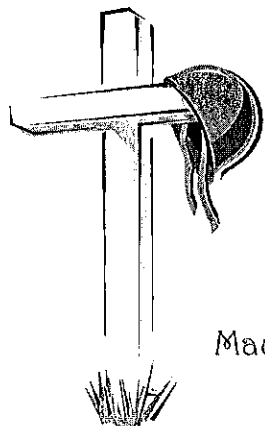
Day

This is the day we honor all the beautiful Mother's in our life. The day is filled with brunches, flowers, and gifts. Each year I reflect on what it is like to be a mom to two little boys. Their Dad died when they were too little to remember him so this "Mom" title means something a bit different. I am their only parent.

Mother's Day for me is about dandelion bouquets, homemade cards, hugs and I love you's. It is another day caring for the amazing gift God gave me of Motherhood. Our family is defined purely out of love. The day is special simply because I am a mother and not because this day is a day dedicated to mothers on the calendar. It is a time to celebrate all God's graces. My ultimate grace is playing outside with my boys on this day called Mother's Day and truly being in the moment with these gifts I call my sons. Guiding my boys from childhood to adulthood is one of the greatest joys I have been given.

Used with permission from Sandra Coleman, Marriage Prep Specialist, Omaha Archdiocese.

Memorial Day Prayer



Loving Father, we remember all those who have gone
before us believing in freedom for all.

May they find peace in your loving embrace,
a kingdom of perfect justice.

May we live out the ideals and hope
in which they believed and for which they sacrificed.

We offer you all that we are.

May our thoughts, our work and our words give You Praise and
thanks. May our lives show forth Your love and care.

Let us see our world with Your eyes of understanding.

Let us hear the voices of those who are asking for help.

Give us the courage to share our lives, our time and
our gifts so that others may find greater joy.

We offer You all that we have in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Beginning Experience:

Separated, Divorced, Widow
Tara at 701-426-8303

Level I—Charity Lutheran

Level II—Faith Lutheran

Level III—Good Shepherd

Each level is 10 weeks. All levels run
concurrently. See website below.

Children's Beginning Experience:

Susan at 1-701-258-3152

Free Preschool for 3&4 year olds for
eligible families; contact BECEP at 701-
323-4400 for school year.

Caring for Children Program—health
coverage to uninsured children. 1-800-
342-4718. www.ndcaring.org

Single File Newsletter

For information

www.bismarcksinglefile.com

Parish Information:

Cathedral—222-2259

St. Anne—223-1549

Ascension—223-3606

St. Mary- 223-5562

Corpus Christi—255-4600

Spirit of Life-663-1660

Christ the King -663-8842

St. Joseph -663-9562

Office of Family Ministry—Diocese of Bismarck—

Joyce McDowall 701-204-7209

Toll Free 1-877-405-7435

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from the mailing list, please call your
parish coordinator**

Parents Forever-Education for Families in divorce Transition, call NDSU Parent Resource Center, 667-3342 or 667-3340

WEBSITES THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST:

- www.celebratesimply.com
- www.bereavementmag.com
- www.beginningexperienceofwesternnorthdakota.org
- www.vibrantfaithathome.org
- www.usccb.org

www.fambooks.com/moms.htm

www.singleparents.about.com

www.bridgetobenefits.org